

M/R

SUBJECT: M5 SPONSORED HYPNOTIST PERFORMANCE

4 DEC 1980

1. On 2 December 1980, I apprised Mr. [] SAO/DDC, and Mr. [] S Security Officer, of my serious concerns related to the sponsoring of a hypnotic show by M5 in which the audience would participate. In consultation with Mr. [] and Dr. [] we agreed that our concerns were threefold and were based on personal experiences with observed hypnotic effects.

a. Once hypnotized, people are more suggestible thereafter.

They can more easily be manipulated by an adversary hypnotist.

b. People in the audience who are not the direct target of the hypnotist often become hypnotized because such people are very susceptible to suggestion.

c. Some people who have psychological problems may use the hypnotic state as a refuge and refuse to return to a normal state.

2. After Mr. [] and Mr. [] consulted with M56, representatives who were coordinating the performance, they were informed that both M5 and M7 representatives, including two psychologists, had carefully interviewed the hypnotist and were convinced that no danger was involved. However, it was also stated that the hypnotist was so capable that M5 had him include security awareness reminders into his act. It was also said that the hypnotist checks the audience participants after the performance to insure that they can perform normally before they leave the auditorium. The implications of such a concern by the hypnotist resulted in both Mr. [] and myself becoming even more anxious about the performance, especially when M5 representatives were also counting on the performer's ability to help alter the behavior of the audience beyond the bounds of the performance. Mr. [] voiced his concerns to Mr. [] who indicated similar sentiments and lack of support for the performance. Mr. [] stated that he would not attend but would not

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prevent others in his organization from doing so if they choose to do so. On 3 December 1980, I consulted with [] of CIA by phonecon regarding the level of danger to be expected from such a performance. He stated that:

- a. He did not expect any measurable long-term effects from either the hypnotizing of deliberate subjects or unwilling subjects.
- b. He agreed that people who were already susceptible to hypnotic suggestion, would experience an increased susceptibility to suggestion but expected it to be of short duration.
- c. He expected the rare effect of having a person with psychological difficulties use the hypnotic state as an escape and refuse to return to a normal state might happen. But he considered that the event happening in such a controlled environment might be beneficial as such a person might just as well use a more destructive means of escaping under other conditions which are harder to detect and deal with effectively.
4. He did not expect even the use of posthypnotic suggestions or prehypnotic suggestions (for enhancing security awareness) would have any long term measureable effect.

